

Notes on Acts 9ish to 11ish

Acts 9:31 – The church multiplied!

The church in Judea...Galilee... Samaria had PEACE and was being BUILT UP ...

Walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit ...

The church (sg.) multiplied – not churches?

Acts 9:32-43 – Peter’s itinerant ministry (healing Aeneas, raising Tabitha)

Peter travelling around – Lydda ~12 miles SE of Joppa (remember Philip? (Acts 8:40))

Came to the saints (cf. 9:13) – not just evangelizing, but visiting Christians?

Aeneas: bed-ridden for 8 years and paralyzed

- “Jesus Christ heals you; rise and make your bed” – cf. Jesus healing paralytic (Mark 2:11)

A disciple named Tabitha (Aramaic) / Dorcas (Greek) = gazelle (cf. Tabea Society at St. Paul’s)

- Compare with Jesus’ story of raising Jairus’ daughter (Mark 5:41 “Tabitha koum” // “Talitha koum”)

Peter’s ministry continues to follow the example of Jesus, by the power of Jesus, connected to the salvation of Jesus (arise! (vv. 9:34, 40), for the glory of Jesus (they turned to the Lord/many believed in the Lord)

And Peter stayed with Simon the *tanner* in Joppa for many days

Acts 10:1-8 – Cornelius summons Peter

Caesarea – the administrative capital of the Roman province of Judea; approx.. 32 miles north of Joppa

Cornelius – seems to believe in God, is respected by Jews (10:22), but not a full proselyte (i.e. not circumcised)... in other words, still a Gentile “dog” (Acts 10:28cf. Matt. 7:6)

Praying at the ninth hour (cf. Acts 3:1)

The angel of God will once more let a person share the Good News (cf. Philip, Ananias)

Acts 10:9-23a – Peter’s Vision (cf. Lev. 11); the Holy Spirit summons Peter

Plans are in place, but Peter is oblivious

A vision of a divine picnic repeated three times (for his three visitors?) perplexes Peter

While Peter ponders, the Spirit summons, and Peter accepts the invitation

Acts 10:23b-48 – Peter preaches the Good News to Cornelius’ household

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Peter gets it: Jews don't associate with Gentiles, but God has shown me that I should call no person unclean or common! (10:28) – but still Peter asks, Why did you call me?

Cornelius bows down, but Peter's not a god // Peter understands, Cornelius is not a dog

Peter's message to Cornelius' household is the Gospel (cf. with the four Gospels or Acts 2:14-39 or even the Second Article of the Apostles' Creed):

- Jesus' life and ministry, death, and resurrection
- the apostles as eye-witnesses
- and Jesus' return as Judge
- the forgiveness of sins is received by ANYONE who believes in Him

While Peter was still saying these things, the Holy Spirit fell on (cf. Acts 8:16) all who heard the word (Rom. 10:17)

Believers from among the circumcised who had come with Peter (10:23b) were amazed because the Holy Spirit was poured out even on the Gentiles (Acts 2:17-18, 33) just as happened on Pentecost

Can anyone withhold water for baptizing these who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?

Acts 11:1-18 – In Jerusalem Peter reports the inclusion of the Gentiles among the believers

The apostles and brothers (Acts 9:17?) throughout Judea heard that the Gentiles also had received the Word of God

Peter goes to Jerusalem and sets the record straight against the circumcision party (i.e. Jewish Jews)

- Divine vision – the clean and unclean animals
- Divine command – accompany the men from Cornelius
- Divine preparation – God had prepared Cornelius for Peter's arrival
- Divine action – the Holy Spirit falling on them with visible signs

The words of Jesus recalled contrasting John's baptism of water with the baptism of the Holy Spirit (11:16)

God gave the same gift to the Gentiles as to us, who could stand in God's way? (cf. Acts 5:39, but also Gal. 2:11ff.) – this is the power of the Gospel at work, not just in Cornelius, but also in Peter, Ananias and Saul

You'd think this would be the last word about Gentiles' standing before God, but we'll hear more on this subjects in Acts 15 and Gal. 2.